

PROPOSAL 52

5 AAC 72.XXX. New Section.

Create an Upper Egegik River Sockeye Salmon Special Harvest Area Management Plan, as follows:

5. AAC xx.xxx Upper Egegik River Sockeye Salmon Special Harvest Area Management Plan.

a) The goal of this plan is to prevent the foregone harvest (overescapement) of sockeye salmon into the Egegik River, while furthering attempts to maintain Allocation goals.

b) The commissioner may open, by emergency order, the Upper Egegik Special Harvest Area to fishing by set gillnet or drift gillnet or both set and drift gillnet concurrently when the commissioner projects that the sockeye salmon escapement into the Egegik river will exceed the minimum of the escapement goal range.

c) The commissioner shall open, by emergency order the Upper Egegik Special Harvest Area to fishing by set gillnet or drift gillnet or both set and drift gillnet concurrently when the commissioner projects that the sockeye salmon escapement into the Egegik river will exceed the mid point range of the escapement goal range.

d) The commissioner shall open, by emergency order the Upper Egegik Special Harvest Area to fishing by both set and drift gillnet concurrently when the commissioner projects that the sockeye salmon escapement into the Egegik river will exceed the maximum range of the escapement goal range.

e) opener provisions of c) and d) of this section shall be concurrent and of equal or longer duration to any opener called for the regular Egegik district or a 110 version of it.

f) The Upper Egegik Special Harvest Area is all waters above a line from 58 12.80'N, 157 17.04'W and 58 12.28'N, 157 18.53'W to a line between 58 12.30'N , 157 11.74'W and 58 11.98'N , 157 11.74'W.

g) The Upper Egegik Special Harvest Area is known as UESHA.

h) When the UESHA is open under this section,

1) Set gillnet gear may be only operated as follows:

(A) a set gillnet may not exceed 25 fathoms in length;

(B) a set gillnet may not be set or operated within 150' of another set gillnet;

(C) no part of a set gillnet may not be set or operated more than 300' from the 18' high tide mark;

(E) the shoreward end of a set gillnet must go dry at low tide;

(F) a set gillnet may not be set within 500' of a deployed drift gillnet.

2) drift gillnets may be operated as follows:

(A) no more than 75 fathoms of drift gillnet may be used to take salmon with one drift gillnet permit in use on one vessel.

(B) a vessel with one permit in use, may not have more than 150 fathoms of drift gillnet on board;

(C) no more than 100 fathoms of drift gillnet may be used to take salmon with two drift gillnet permits in use on one vessel;

(D) a vessel with two permits in use, may not have more than 200 fathoms of drift gillnet on board;

(E) no part of a drift gillnet may be operated within 150 feet from the side of a set gillnet.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The goal of this plan is to help management prevent the over escapement of Salmon into the Egegik River by creating an upper section of the Egegik District.

Over escapement In Egegik has historically occurred, resulting in a loss to the State, the region, the community, and its participants.

Simultaneously maintaining Allocation Goals and Escapement Goals can at times put those two goals in an adversarial relationship to one another. Restricting opportunity to one gear type to maintain Allocation has in the past resulted in overescapement on occasion, whereas not restricting one gear type when Allocation Goals are unable to be met, results in Allocation goals becoming secondary, and get ignored, which also has also happened in the past.

Having an additional tool of a supplemental Upper Egegik Special Harvest Area (UESHA) available to the managing Biologist to help maintain both Escapement and Allocation would help limit waste (overescapement), while helping maintain Allocation.

Tailoring the opening of the proposed Special Harvest Area during emergency management to one or both of the Gear types (Set and/or Drift) to run concurrently or separately to Egegik district openings, when Escapement Goals are expected to be met or exceeded with the Egegik district at large or during 110 line situations, will assist Management in maintaining Allocation Goals without restricting or impacting the harvest of fish within the regular Egegik District or other Districts. Emphasis added on ‘other districts’ considering the potential use of a KVSHA.

In every day terms, if one gear type is falling behind in allocation **while escapement is exceeding goals** this (if implemented) will provide an extra opportunity for that gear type to ‘catch up’ without incumbering the other- or other districts. If implemented it would allow a gear type or both, opportunity to salvage on what would otherwise become over escapement.

(Generalized description)

(from existing upper boundary to the top of High Bluff is the proposed UESHA)

(the proposed UESHA north side river marker (high bluff) is 3 miles upstream of the original upper north side river marker)

(for comparison, the original upper marker is nearly 6 miles upstream of coffee point)

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Yes, I spoke with many participants of both gear types, as well as processing managers in and about Egegik during the summer of 24 to gather input. I also Spoke with Stacey Vega (2025’s managing biologist) regarding this matter early in 2025 roughing out this concept, she advised looking to the Ugashik Special Harvest Area’s ‘language’ as a standard or starting point. I conversed with Mitch Seybert (the chair of the BB advisory committee) as an individual, most recently who endorses this concept as drafted in this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Luke Gardner

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